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THE CHRONICLE
of Higher Education®

ISSN 0009-5982

November 7, 1990 • $2.75
Volume XXXVII, Number 10

News Summary

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Farm Bill Directs Agriculture Dept. to Alter Use of Funds

Competitive-grants program angers many college officials

By SCOTT JASCHIK

WASHINGTON

Congress has directed the Agriculture Department to revamp the way federal dollars are used for agriculture research.

Among the changes:

- More emphasis will be placed on environmental issues.
- More research money will be awarded through competitions.
- Colleges receiving agriculture-research funds must set up guidelines to prevent conflicts of interest by faculty members.
- The practice of earmarking money for facilities in some agriculture-research programs will be limited.

Some of the changes, such as the environmental focus, are popular with scholars at land-grant universities who receive millions of dollars in federal support each year. But other changes have prompted anger. Many university officials, for example, say the terms under which the competitive-grants program was set up may insure its failure.

The changes are contained in a mammoth piece of legislation that sets spending limits and regulations for the nation's agriculture programs. Congress passed the bill last month, and President Bush has said he will sign it.

The legislation, known as the farm bill, is rewritten every five years. The process is always contentious because farm-state lawmakers try to craft the bill to promote their own states' crops.

The final legislation reflects that proc-

Continued on Page A24

College Board to Revise Entrance Exam; Says New Version Will Be More Useful

Changes will take effect in 1994; testing critics are not satisfied

By JEAN EVANGELAUF

BOSTON

The College Board announced last week that it would revise the Scholastic Aptitude Test in ways that it said would make the examination more useful to students, schools, and colleges.

In a decision that drew both criticism and praise, the board said that, beginning in 1994, the S.A.T. would place more emphasis on critical reading skills and include some mathematics questions that would require test takers to calculate and write in answers, rather than to select the correct responses from among multiple choices. In addition, test takers would be permitted to use calculators.

The board will also overhaul its Achievement Test program, adding tests in new subjects and revising the contents and format of current tests. Among the new tests will be a one-hour writing examination that will include a 20-minute essay question. The hour-long achievement tests are optional and cover 15 subjects; last year 200,000 students took one or more of them. Achievement-test takers typically earn high S.A.T. scores and apply to

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REVISED S.A.T.

Verbal Section

- Critical reading and reasoning will be emphasized.
- Reading passages will be longer than in present exam.

Mathematics Section

- 20 per cent of the questions will require students to write answers instead of selecting from multiple-choice alternatives, as at present.
- Use of calculators will be permitted.
- Emphasis on data interpretation and applied mathematics will be increased.

U.S. Judge Reverses Order to Reorganize La. Higher Education

A federal judge last week threw out rulings he handed down in 1989 that would have required a major reorganization of higher education in Louisiana.

Federal District Judge Charles Schwartz, Jr., said that a September appeals-court ruling in a Mississippi desegregation case had changed the legal standards for proving the existence of illegal segregation in higher education. Under the new standards, with which he said he disagreed, Judge Schwartz said he had no choice but to reverse his earlier finding that Louisiana was operating a segregated system.

In the earlier finding, Judge Schwartz ordered that the state's three higher-education systems be merged and that admissions standards be imposed at some institutions. The orders, which had been on hold pending appeals, sharply divided Louisiana educators and politicians. It was unclear last week what would happen to

Continued on Page A20

College Pension Market Enters an Era of Tough Competition and Close Scrutiny

By CAROLYN J. MOONEY

The college pension market is entering a new era of unprecedented competition.

Higher education's largest pension companies and many others seeking a piece of the retirement-fund market can expect to face close scrutiny and sharp questions about their investment policies and long-term performance—especially as the economy worsens.

Colleges "will be under great pressure to point out the performance of funds," said Louis R. Morrell, Radcliffe College's financial vice-president and treasurer. "The more information people have, the better."

The new climate has been dramatized in recent weeks by an angry debate between a reporter for a financial weekly and the two largest pension companies—the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association and the College Retirement Equities Fund.

The $84-billion companies found themselves on the defensive after *Barron's*, a weekly financial paper, published an article highly critical of them. Called "Still in an Ivory Tower," it questioned whether TIAA-CREF's investment strategies—which reaped strong results in the bull market of the past decade—would be as effective now that the economy is taking a downturn and the college pension market is opening up to competitors.

The author, Maggie Mahar, also sharply criticized TIAA-CREF officials for refusing to speak to her because she had written a critical article about the companies in 1987.

Only days after it was published, the latest article prompted a heated exchange between Ms. Mahar and a TIAA-CREF official at a Boston conference on pension issues. At the conference, sponsored by the New England Board of Higher Education, Ms. Mahar, a speaker, repeated the concerns she had cited in her article. Thomas W. Jones, TIAA-CREF's chief financial officer, rose from the audience to deliver an unexpected—and, some observers said, angry—rebuttal.

'Antagonistic and Sneering Tone'

In a letter to *Barron's*, TIAA-CREF later accused the reporter of writing with an "inexplicable bias" and a "pervasive antagonistic and sneering tone." Mr. Jones said in an interview that *Barron's* had acted irresponsibly by raising doubts about

Continued on Page A15

U.S. Universities Forge New Links to Europe

Officials of American universities are looking to Europe to find markets for commercial products arising from their research: Page A29.

MARGINALIA

From *The Advisor*, a publication of the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions:

"Effective January 1, 1986, the Higher Education Amendments of 1986 redefined an independent student as an individual at least 254 years old by December 31 of the award year or a graduate / professional student who would not be claimed as an income tax exemption by his / her parents. . . ."

Poor Mom and Dad are too *tired* to claim him / her as an income-tax exemption.

■

Student's evaluation of a faculty member at Pacific Lutheran University:

"Professor Smith's presentation of the subject was exspiring. I learned some things that I didn't know."

What more can one ask?

■

The first of the fall 1990 "Minimum Academic Admissions Standards for Developmental Studies and Freshman Classes" at the University System of Georgia is:

"Virtually all high school graduates will be omitted to an institution somewhere in the System."

It's a start, anyway.

■

A letter to a student in the women's honors program at Gordon College sends much the same message:

"This is to inform you that you have been excepted for resident living in Stafford House."

■

Memorandum to people living in a residence hall at the University of Rochester:

". . . University Facilities will be undertaking a Space and Utility Study in Wilmot.

"The study will cause little disruption to room occupants. The surveyors will simply measure the room, count light fixtures, smoke heads, and take nameplate information off electrical equipment."

Sounds pretty disruptive to *us*.

■

From the University of Virginia's *Graduate Record* for 1990-91:

"In creating an academical village, Jefferson brought scholars who had distinguished reputations and were willing to lie among their students—an unusual, but from Jefferson's point of view, essential combination."

Unusual isn't the half of it.

■

Ad for Texas Christian University in an unidentified newspaper (not us):

"Trombone & Euphonium, Part-time, 1 year. Non Tenor Track."

Baritones accepted? —C.G.

In Brief

750 Laboratory Animals Released at SUNY

BUFFALO, N.Y.—Intruders released about 750 laboratory animals from their cages at the medical school of the State University of New York at Buffalo, seriously disrupting two research projects.

Among the animals set free were 620 mice, 89 rats, 35 hamsters, 5 chickens, and a quail. The animals were in cages in sealed rooms at the medical school's animal facility. The intruders opened the doors to the cages, which enabled the animals to crawl out but not to escape from the rooms. The intruders also destroyed a freezer and broke into storage cabinets.

The university's public-safety department said an unknown caller had contacted the campus last week to claim responsibility for the break-in on behalf of an animal-rights group calling itself "Animals Now."

"We don't know for sure it was animal-rights people," said Linda Grace-Kobas, a spokeswoman for the university. "It could have been just pranksters. We did get the one phone call but we have no way of verifying it. We're continuing to investigate."

University officials said the two projects most disrupted by the incident involve studies in transplantation immunology and research on a vaccine for schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease.

Strike at U. of Bridgeport Is Ruled a Lockout

BRIDGEPORT, CONN.—A labor dispute that has kept as many as 75 faculty members on the picket line at the University of Bridgeport is a lockout rather than a strike, state labor officials have ruled.

The ruling, by the Employment Security Division of the Connecticut Department of Labor, made the striking professors eligible for unemployment compensation beginning in the week of September 22. The job action by the professors, represented in collective bargaining by the Bridgeport chapter of the American Association of University Professors, began September 1.

Under Connecticut law, striking employees who offer to return to work under the terms of an expired collective-bargaining agreement pending negotiation of a new contract are eligible for unemployment compensation if their employers do not allow them to return.

According to the labor board's decision, the university rejected the faculty union's offer to return to work under the terms of its contract before the university cut wages and benefits.

The ruling is expected to cost the university some $17,000 a week in unemployment-compensation payments.

Stanford Band Sidelined for 'Insensitivity'

STANFORD, CAL.

An appearance by the Stanford University band at a football game last weekend was canceled following a half-time routine the week before in which the band lampooned the spotted-owl controversy in the Northwest. The incident occurred at the University of Oregon.

'Booed off the Field'

The band, officially named the Incomparable Leland Stanford Junior University Marching Band, was "suspended" for at least one game for displaying "an insensitivity and disrespect to the Oregon community," said Alan Cummings, acting director of athletics at Stanford.

Mr. Cummings said the band had been "booed off the field."

"The Department of Athletics will not be embarrassed again by the band," he said.

Mr. Cummings said the band had been told it would not be allowed to perform at last weekend's game against Washington State University at Stanford Stadium. He said the band could be reinstated and allowed to perform at the university's last two games of the football season if it submits "an agreeable show format" to be approved in advance by the athletics department.

In a statement, the band said the suspension was "unreasonable, unjust, and undeserved."

The band's statement said that the Oregon crowd had been "booing and shouting obscenities" at the band from the time it entered the stadium and "probably would have booed our half-time show regardless of its focus." —JACK McCURDY

CHRIS PIETSCH, EUGENE REGISTER-GUARD

Members of the Stanford University band during their controversial half-time show at the University of Oregon.

Claremont Group Protests Production of 'Mikado'

CLAREMONT, CAL.—A group of faculty members and administrators at the Claremont Colleges last week protested a scheduled performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, which they said promotes "pernicious, racist, and sexist stereotypes" of Asians.

In doing so, the opera commits "psychological violence," the group said in a letter to the presidents and deans of the Claremont Colleges, a consortium of six independent private institutions.

The production is particularly appalling "in an historical moment when Japan-bashing and anti-Asian violence are on the rise," the letter said.

The group planned a rally and teach-in outside Bridges Auditorium, where the opera was scheduled to be performed last weekend by a national touring company.

"Our consciousness certainly has been raised . . . as we plan future seasons of theatrical events," said Eleanor Montague, acting director of the auditorium. However, she said the performance of *The Mikado* would be held as scheduled.

Vice-President Resigns Amid Allegations

ELON COLLEGE, N.C. — Elon College has decided not to press charges against a former vice-president for administrative services who resigned amid allegations that he had embezzled nearly $100,000 from the college.

Robert E. Poindexter, who had been vice-president since 1986,

Librarians in California Weigh Mandatory Bibliographic Instruction

By JUDITH AXLER TURNER

College and university librarians in California say mandatory bibliographic instruction could offset some of the effects of a tax-limiting measure adopted in the state in 1978. But the librarians doubt the state can afford it.

Known as Proposition 13, the 1978 measure and its repercussions led school districts to cut back on all non-essential services. School libraries were often deemed non-essential.

Now, however, 90 per cent of the California students in the state-university system "have no library skills," says Michael J. Perkins, business-reference librarian at San Diego State University.

Linda J. Goff, a library-instruction librarian at California State University at Sacramento, says that when she mentions a standard reference source like the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* to a student, "there is no recognition factor at all."

No Time for Analysis

University librarians are trying to take up the slack and provide bibliographic instruction as students come in for assistance, "but when we must spend the majority of our time on the card catalog and periodical indexes, there is not much time left for analysis and explanation of the unique information patterns of the various disciplines represented at a major university," Mr. Perkins says.

Mr. Perkins and Ms. Goff are involved with a committee of the California Library Association that is looking at solutions to the problem—solutions ranging from supporting larger budgets for elementary-school and high-school libraries to mandating bibliographic-instruction courses in colleges and universities.

"I see students entering the California State University system without even the most basic library skills," Mr. Perkins says. "Entering freshmen cannot read and interpret a simple bibliographic citation. Card catalogs—not to mention on-line catalogs—and periodical indexes baffle and confuse them. And the concept of an organized, systematic approach to information gathering is totally foreign."

According to Mr. Perkins, only 43 per cent of California's public grade schools have a room or other area designated as a library; only 32 per cent of California school libraries are staffed, even part time, by a certified librarian; and fewer than 2 per cent of the school libraries have a phone line that might be used for on-line searching or interlibrary loan requests.

A proposal by the committee to require bibliographic instruction will be discussed this week at the annual meeting of the California Library Association, but Ms. Goff does not believe it will win acceptance. "Anything that has cost involved is looked on with great trepidation in California," she says. ■

The Chronicle of Higher Education (ISSN 0009-5982) is published weekly except the last two weeks in August and the last two weeks in December, at 1255 Twenty-Third Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037. Subscription rate: $62.50 per year. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1990 by The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inc. Printed in the United States of America. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Chronicle of Higher Education, P.O. Box 1955, Marion, Ohio 43305. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. The Chronicle reserves the right not to accept an advertiser's order. Only publication of an advertisement shall constitute final acceptance of the advertiser's order.

resigned after the college hired independent auditors to investigate the allegations.

Local papers reported that about $100,000 in construction work on Mr. Poindexter's home had allegedly been billed to the college. According to the reports, the work was performed by a company that was renovating the home of the college president at the same time.

Elon officials would not confirm or deny the allegations.

The Board of Trustees voted unanimously to accept Mr. Poindexter's resignation rather than seek prosecution regarding the "financial irregularities," according to a statement released by the college.

In an interview, a college spokeswoman said the trustees—in a closed session with lawyers—had decided it was "in the best interest of Elon College not to pursue the matter further."

Riot Ruins Homecoming at South Dakota State

BROOKINGS, S.D. — A homecoming celebration at South Dakota State University turned into a mêlée when nearly 1,000 people, including many students, roamed city streets setting bonfires, turning over a car, and throwing rocks and bottles at police and fire fighters.

Two people were injured and state, city, and campus police made more than 50 arrests over the weekend.

A spokesman for the university said most of the arrests were for underage consumption of alcohol, but he said 10 people had been charged with felonies that included grand theft, aggravated assault, inciting to riot, and damage to property.

University officials estimated damage to the campus at $30,000. They said the university had set up two panels to investigate the incident.

Corrections

■ Because of incorrect information supplied to the Center for Higher Education at Illinois State University by Arizona officials, the percentage increases in state appropriations from the 1989 fiscal year to the 1991 fiscal year for colleges and universities in the state were listed incorrectly in the October 24 issue of *The Chronicle*. The two-year percentage increase for the University of Arizona was 9.4 per cent; for Arizona State University, 19.7 per cent; for Northern Arizona University, 15.4 per cent; and for community colleges, 12.9 per cent. Total state spending on higher education in Arizona increased 14.1 per cent.

■ A news brief about more than 100 arrests made at two rowdy football parties (*The Chronicle*, October 24) incorrectly stated that students from four universities who were arrested would not face disciplinary action. Central Michigan University will hold disciplinary hearings for 17 of its students who were arrested.

PORTRAIT

An Education Professor Tries to Put His 'Fantasy School' Into Effect

By BEVERLY T. WATKINS

PROVIDENCE, R.I.

When Theodore R. Sizer founded the Coalition of Essential Schools six years ago, he expected a handful of high schools—a dozen at most—to join him in his reform effort. After all, he wasn't providing a model, just offering "a conversation among friends about some important ideas," as he puts it.

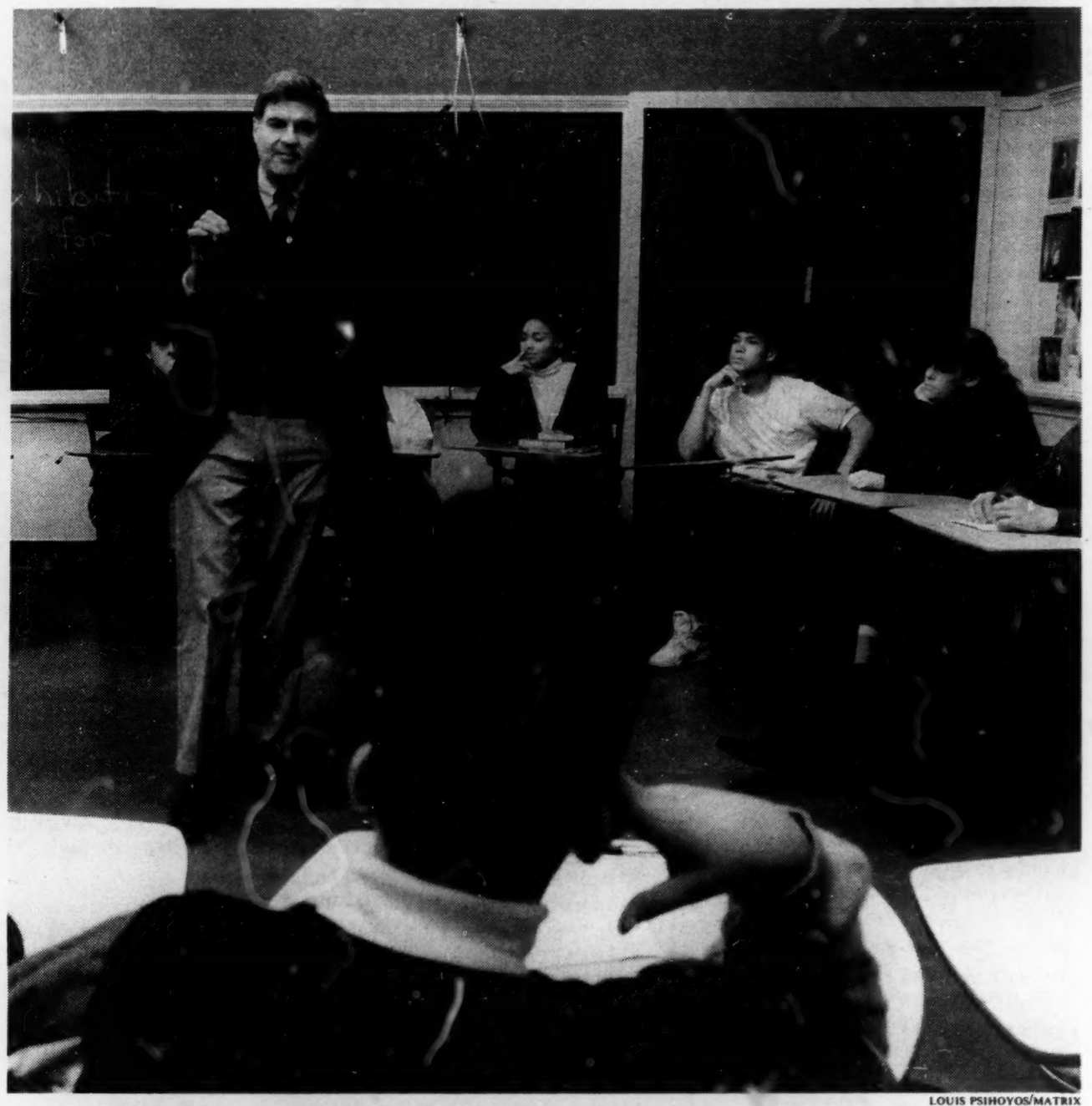
Today, 65 secondary and middle schools have joined his conversation—which challenges the curricula, teaching methods, and structure of established institutions—and have adopted Mr. Sizer's ideas.

Mr. Sizer, a professor of education at Brown University, where the coalition has its headquarters, is still surprised at the success of his venture.

"I thought we'd stop at 12 schools," he says. "Instead, the coalition is like a rapidly growing industry."

Two years ago the Education Commission of the States threw its support behind the group, acknowledging that school reform was impossible without the involvement of governors and state agencies. The organizations are working together now in a project called "Re:Learning," giving the coalition an opportunity to plant its ideas in an additional 60 schools, including some elementary schools.

Last May New York's Citibank showed its approval of Mr. Sizer's educational philosophy by giving the coalition $3-million to develop a roster of experienced principals and schoolteachers from among its members who could help other schools with reform.



LOUIS PSIHOYOS/MATRIX

Theodore R. Sizer: "My feeling about teacher education—from having been a dean of a school of education—is that it is ill suited to the kind of effort we have in mind."

Fewer Subjects, More Depth

In what Mr. Sizer calls his "fantasy school," teachers would teach fewer subjects than they do now, and teach them in greater depth. Students would be active learners—"student as worker," as Mr. Sizer puts it—and teachers would be coaches, not lecturers who deliver information.

In addition, teachers would be responsible for no more than 80 students, rather than 175 or so, a number that Mr. Sizer says is common now. Only after students demonstrated mastery of the knowledge and skills of the school's curriculum would diplomas be awarded.

"Good schools accept the inconvenience that no two kids are alike," says Mr. Sizer, elaborating on his ideal. "Seven kids may get the answer to a problem wrong, but it may be for seven different reasons."

To understand those reasons, "you have to know each student well enough to know why in each case," he says. "Kids learn in different ways. They are interested in different things. So you can't teach in one way."

Mr. Sizer maintains that reducing the total number of subjects that students take in school is critical.

"To get kids in the habit of using their minds means giving them important questions and lots of time to struggle with them," he says. "One issue can't be knocked off in one day—tomorrow you will read the Bill of Rights and Friday there will be a test."

In a coalition school, he says, "you cover a lot less, but you do it thoroughly."

"Less is more."

"This is all common sense," he adds. "It is nothing bizarre. What is bizarre is the way we run schools now."

"To get kids in the habit of using their minds means giving them important questions and lots of time to struggle with them."

The coalition's founder acknowledges that he was marked as an educational reformer in childhood.

"I grew up with parents who preached the word that you should leave the planet a better place than you found it," he says.

9 'Common Principles'

Mr. Sizer traces the roots of his personal reform effort to his college days, when he studied history and education at Harvard University and wrote his doctoral dissertation on "the turn-of-the-century high school."

He became an assistant professor of education at Harvard in 1961 and dean of the Graduate School of Education three years later. In 1972 he "deliberately left" the university to become headmaster of Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass., in part because his children were enrolled there.

Mr. Sizer resigned from the academy in 1981 to run a five-year study of American high schools. In the report of that study, *Horace's Compromise: the Dilemma of the American High School*, he spelled out nine "common principles" to guide school reform. Those principles became the foundation for the coalition.

In 1984, when Brown University expressed interest in the Coalition of Essential Schools, Mr. Sizer joined the faculty as a professor and chairman of the education department.

Mr. Sizer concedes that the kind of institution the coalition envisions now "is not what the public is clamoring for."

"This school involves a fundamental rethinking of the way teachers have taught and the way they should teach," he says.

To take his principles seriously, he says, "involves a major shift in the way teachers think and act."

"This is exceedingly difficult intellectual work," he says.

Today Mr. Sizer confesses to being "impatient" with the pace of educational change in the United States.

He contends that "the toughest obstacle to reform today is public indifference to the need for significant change."

Although many public officials understand how serious the educational situation is and speak out about it, he says, they have no incentive to deal with the issue, because the public does not view it as critical.

'A Striking Lack of Interest'

Institutions of higher education, which might be expected to support educational change, "have not been a major player in 80's school reform," says Mr. Sizer, adding, "They have shown a striking lack of interest in our kind of work."

Mr. Sizer acknowledges that he deliberately excluded schools of education from the coalition's efforts.

"My feeling about teacher education—from having been a dean of a school of education—is that it is ill suited to the kind of effort we have in mind," he says. "Teacher education has too many problems of its own now that get in the way."

Mr. Sizer adds, "We believe that real reform, to be lasting and effective, must be bottom up, driven by those who know the students best—teachers in the classrooms."

Asked to predict the eventual outcome of the coalition's school-reform effort, Mr. Sizer says he is not optimistic.

Although some coalition schools have achieved some success, he says, "history suggests that we will fail."

"There are not enough people who care enough to carry through the painful steps," he says. ■